Black Day: Holiday for the Loveless

Whether loathed or loved, most everyone the world over knows Saint Valentine's Day. Then there's White Day a month later in which men who received chocolate on February 14th return the favor. Fewer people know of Sweetest Day, a holiday concocted by candy makers in the US for mid-October, where loved ones purchase candy and small gifts for one another. But have you ever heard of Black Day?

Black Day is a uniquely Korean holiday in response to the cloying sweetness of Valentine's Day and White Day. In Korea, the tradition of obligatory chocolate has sprung up for both these days. Women give chocolate not just to husbands or boyfriends, but to male coworkers, friends, and love interests on Valentine's Day. Men reciprocate on White Day. The amount of chocolate one receives tends to measure his/her popularity, which can be a real ouch to the ego.

Black Day, which falls on April 14th, offers the opportunity for the loveless to commiserate together. People who didn't receive any chocolate or gifts on either Valentine's Day or White Day advertise their single status with black clothes -- more than one single guy and girl have started seeing one another after Black Day. What's more, celebrants eat a noodle dish with black bean sauce, drink alcohol, and gripe about romance and love. There are no presents to buy, no unfulfilled expectations, and no baring of the soul to a secret admirer. Perhaps the best part of the holiday comes down to its obscurity, though. It has yet to be packaged and marketed and sold to the consumer like its contrary counterparts in February and March.

Teacher's Notes:

* Underlined words in red typeface may be vocabulary unfamiliar to the students.
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Notes:
**STEP ONE**

**Title:** Speculate and/or discuss the contents of today's article from its title: "Black Day: Holiday for the Loveless."

**STEP TWO**

**Do you agree or disagree? Why?**:

a. Saint Valentine's Day is the best holiday of the year!

b. If I'm single on Saint Valentine's Day, I feel lonely and depressed.

c. There's a lot of pressure to buy gifts and have romantic dinners on Valentine's Day.

d. I wish there were a holiday to celebrate being single.

e. All holidays are a complete waste of time!

**STEP THREE**

**The Article:** Read the article, and work with a partner to understand it. Lastly, summarize in your own words.

**STEP FOUR**

**Discuss:** Talk about the following questions in pairs/groups. Remember to support your answers!

a. What was your general impression after reading this article?


c. Will Black Day spread around the world and become a commercial holiday? Why/not?

d. Have you ever celebrated a holiday, but didn't see much point in doing so? Why/not?

e. Does your country have any unique holidays? Please explain.

f. What is a holiday, apart from possibly a day off from school or work?

**STEP FIVE**

**Discuss:** You have the chance to create a new holiday! Work with a partner/group to brainstorm possible answers to the questions below. But don't let the questions limit your imagination! Share your new holiday.

What will it celebrate?

When will people celebrate the new holiday?

How will people celebrate it?

Will people go anywhere special? How about buy / eat / do anything special?